Industry Joins Forces To Launch Students Into Exciting Careers Through Rocket Competition

(NAPSA)—If there were an Olympics for student math and science achievement, regrettably, there would be no U.S.A. cheers during the medal ceremonies. Two new reports show that American students rank 11th among major nations in 4th-grade math, ninth in 8th-grade math, seventh in 4th-grade science and tenth in 8th-grade science. This is no surprise, as for decades, educators have decried America's math and science achievement gap, noting it will hurt our nation's ability to compete in the global economy.

Teens can win scholarship money by building rockets.

Fortunately, America's aerospace and defense industry has come up with an exciting solution to interest students in pursuing science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers. It's called TARC, the Team America Rocketry Challenge, and it has helped the aspirations of thousands of students achieve orbital velocity.

For 10 years, 7th through 12th grade boys and girls have participated in TARC, the world's largest student rocket contest. Sponsored by the Aerospace Industries Association and the National Association of Rocketry, TARC teams design, build and fly a model rocket based on guidelines that would challenge even NASA rocket scientists. This year, teams are tasked to build a rocket that can safely carry one raw egg up to 750 feet (200 feet higher than the Washington Monument) and land within 48–50 seconds.

The top 100 teams from TARC local qualification flights will "fly off" for $60,000 in scholarships in the national finals, held May 11, in The Plains, Virginia. The winning team will compete in the International Rocketry Challenge at the Paris Air Show in June.

For more information on TARC and U.S. STEM education innovations, visit www.rocketcontest.org and www.aia-aerospace.org.